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employee takeovers offers assistance after the horse has bolted. Such suggestions during the years of Reaganomics and Thatcherism seem fanciful. This book is set within narrow technical parameters and in doing so succeeds in illuminating the peaks and pitfalls of employee ownership. Yet it must be said that wider and more fundamental issues are neglected.

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Work Motivation. Theory, Issues, and Applications, by Craig C. Pinder, Glenview, Ill., Scott, Foresman and Corp., 1984, XIV + 365 pp., ISBN 0-673-15799-7

Human functioning is explainable in the terms of what humans want, how rational they are, and how much they are able and willing to learn. Different theories may be of differential value in understanding and influencing employee behaviour in different types of work situations. This depends on the degree of knowledge an individual has about potential outcomes from his/her acts, as well as on the degree of knowledge the individual has about the nature of the causal relationships that exist, if any, among major elements of that setting. Appropriate reasoning on work motivation will differ accordingly depending on appropriate contingencies. In the ambiguous situations internalized norms and values play a higher motivational role than in the clear situations. According to Pinder, «organizational scientists interested in work motivation have under-emphasized the role of the contexts within which employee motivation is generated and expended».

Levels of task difficulty actual or perceived by the employee depend much on his/her characteristics: ability, state of mind, personality, self-esteem, need for independence. Several organizational characteristics also play much role: quality and quantity of available information, budget, technology (technologically constrained jobs), unionization, organizational dependence, standardization, centralization, role ambiguity, role conflict (inter-role, inter-sender, person/role, intra-sender). Relationship between performance and rewards may be distorted due to the fixed payment systems, rigid union contracts, seniority rights, task interdependencies, informal pressures, organizational goals inconsistent with paying for performance, personnel turnover, current levels of profitability, personal characteristics of managers and their ability to handle the complex situation. The influence of employee satisfaction from work-related outcomes is much related to the assessment of the nature and strength of a particular employee's needs in any given situation, kinds of reinforcements and punishers available to the manager, and the differences in the perception of rewards and punishments by various employees (equity and equality).

Motivational theories are too general and they need to be considered within a specific context which is a major determinant of the nature, intensity and duration of human behaviour. We need much more research effort to understand better the specific aspects of behavioral contexts that are either reinforcing or punishing. There is a need of a taxonomy of individuals based upon objective (demographic) and intrapsychic factors. Socio-organizational settings have to be differentiated and their impact needs to be evaluated. There is much room for development in all these fields.

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